

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO SERIES

___ ACTION
X NOTICE 04-22

ISSUE DATE: 07/30/2004
DISPOSAL DATE: 12/31/2005

*PROGRAM CATEGORIES:

___ AS	___ FM	___ ML	___ TR
___ CC	___ FL	___ NA	<u>X</u> W-2
___ CS	___ IT	<u>X</u> RA	___ WIA
___ CF	___ JC	___ TC	
___ CR	___ LM	___ TA	

To: W-2 Agency Directors
County Department of Human Services Directors
County Department of Social Service Directors
Voluntary Resettlement Agency Directors
Refugee E&T Agency Director

From: Bill Clingan /s/
Division Administrator

RE: Refugee Service Plan and Co-Case Management

PURPOSE:

This memo provides information designed to help ensure that all parties collaborate to provide refugees with rapid self-sufficiency. The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) anticipates releasing \$1 million dollars in W-2 funds, \$125,498 in Targeted Assistance Carryover Funds to W-2 agencies, and \$675,500 in refugee Unanticipated Arrival funds to refugee employment and training (E&T) agencies (contingent upon federal grant award), to serve this population. This Memo outlines the expected interagency cooperation for agencies impacted by refugee arrivals. This Memo also provides information to coordinate refugee flow processing and co-case management for newly arriving refugees who may be eligible for dual enrollment in both refugee employment and training programs plus W-2 or Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) programs.

BACKGROUND:

The State Department has recently announced plans to admit Lao-Hmong refugees who have been living in Thailand. It will not be known exactly how many will resettle in Wisconsin until State Department screenings are completed. However, it is currently estimated that Wisconsin may receive up to 3,600 Lao-Hmong refugees during the period July 2004 through December 2004. While the number of refugees anticipated to relocate to Wisconsin is a significant increase in resettlement numbers compared to the 2001-2003 time period, it represents less than a 10% increase in Wisconsin's current Hmong population.

* PROGRAM CATEGORIES:

AS--Apprenticeship Standards	FM--Financial Management Requirements	ML--Migrant Labor	TR--Transportation
CC--Child Care	FL--Foreign Labor Certification	NA--Native American Services	W-2--Wisconsin Works
CS--Child Support	IT--IT Systems	RA--Refugee Assistance	WIA--Workforce Investment Act
CF--Children First	JC--Job Center	TC--Tax Credit Programs	
CR--Civil Rights	LM--Labor Market Information	TA--Trade Assistance	

POLICY:

Program Model

Wisconsin has a proven track record with this population which has allowed Wisconsin Hmong to accrue the highest median income, lowest poverty rate, and highest home-ownership of Hmong anywhere in the country. That success is built on the following principles:

Shared goals. All agencies strive to assist participants in obtaining immediate connection to the workforce. Educational services are concurrent with employment activities and continue after employment.

Performance-driven system. Each funded agency will have a goal for assisting families to self-sufficiency so that they do not need to rely on public cash assistance, and future funding is based on current performance in meeting that goal.

Primary service is bilingual job development. Job developer has the flexibility to work with specific clients, assist with job interviews, translate work instructions and safety information, and provide on-site follow-up to resolve problems and assure retention.

Coordinated planning. Services are coordinated at the system and case level between the W-2 agency, voluntary agency, and the refugee employment and training agency.

Co-case management with W-2 and refugee providers.

- Each type of agency has a contractual responsibility to provide case management and has different performance standards. A single, coordinated case plan is essential in order to maximize effective use of resources and ensure life-skills training provided by voluntary agencies and refugee agencies are appropriately scheduled and monitored.
- Short-term goal is immediate employment; longer-term goal includes training and job upgrading.

Build on strengths.

- Work with both wage earners in the household;
- Build motivation with family and anchor relatives. Hmong currently exit W-2 at a faster rate than the average participant does.
- Use network of current employers of refugees.
- Engage Hmong community leaders and community based organizations (CBOs) in the process.

This Memo contains a template for an interagency Memorandum of Understanding and Plan, and information on refugee flow and co-case management, which are designed to ensure that the involved agencies work together to support the common goal of rapid refugee self-sufficiency.

Refugee Program Resources

Voluntary Resettlement Agencies

To better understand how resettled refugees can typically be supported in Wisconsin, Attachment 1 provides a summary of refugee processing which includes major support agencies and programs that can be involved. Private Voluntary Resettlement Agencies (VOLAGS) contracted by the federal government will usually serve as the first Wisconsin organization to provide refugee resettlement support. (A listing of the VOLAGS in Wisconsin is at http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/programs/refugees/partner_resources/information.htm.) VOLAGS are expected to refer refugees to apply for food stamps, medical assistance, employment services, child care, W-2/FSET, and/or Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) program support. VOLAGS are required by the federal contract to develop a self-sufficiency plan for each refugee and also provide a variety of orientation and life skills training services which can be incorporated into the W-2 employability plan (EP). Collaboration on planning and delivery of initial services will help ensure full engagement at limited cost to the W-2 agency, while it speeds the refugee to self-sufficiency. W-2/FSET case managers will need to work closely together with VOLAGS to ensure coherent planning and delivery of services—ideally the Financial and Employment Planner (FEP) and the VOLAG case manager will complete the initial employability plan in a joint session with both case managers and the refugee family.

Refugee Employment and Training Providers

In selected communities, the DWD has employment contracts with refugee employment providers for bilingual job developers/case managers who can help refugees obtain employment. A listing of these agencies is at http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/programs/refugees/partner_resources/information.htm. W-2 agencies should coordinate with these agencies to determine which services they are best able to provide, and which participants will be referred to them. Current funding for these agencies is only sufficient to fund a part-time case manager/job developer. However, if the DWD is awarded additional federal refugee funds, most of these refugee employment and training agencies will receive some additional funding. Many of these agencies have substantial experience providing refugee-specific employment services, including world-of-work orientation, job coaching and motivation, bilingual skill training, and job development with employers with a history of employing refugees. These agencies may, therefore, be able to provide key W-2 services to this population.

Refugee Services Plan

To effectively coordinate these diverse services, it is essential that staff from the affected agencies meet and agree upon notification and referral processes and roles and responsibilities. Attachment 2 contains a template for a Memorandum of Understanding to be entered into between the W-2 agency, the voluntary resettlement agency and the refugee employment and training agency. This is an optional MOU designed to help agencies clarify processes and responsibilities. W-2 agencies and refugee E&T agencies who will be receiving additional funding for services to refugees will be required to meet to complete a single, joint plan for these services. The planning instructions will be transmitted in a separate Administrator's Memo which addresses all additional funds being released at this time.

Refugee Cash Assistance Reimbursement (RMA) (See W-2 Manual Chapter 20)

W-2 agencies are responsible for administering RCA and RMA. Since CARES currently is not programmed to support the RCA program, the W-2 agency must manually generate RCA payments.

W-2 agencies are reimbursed for their RCA and related administrative costs separate from their W-2 contract allocation. Related payment profiles 0133 and 0134 for W-2 agencies to claim reimbursement for RCA cash and administrative program costs are provided at DWD internet site: http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/core/core_program_codes.htm

Forms for Caseload Reports are also available at:
http://dwdworkweb/forms/dws/DWSM_2478.htm. They should be sent to:

DWD/DWS
Bureau of Migrant Refugee and Labor Services
201 E Washington Ave G100
Madison WI 53707-7972

Other Resources

Culturally Competent Mental Health and Support Services

The DWD contracts for culturally competent health screening, mental health, youth, elderly and domestic violence services. The availability of services varies by community. The providers of these services are identified at:

http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/programs/refugees/partner_resources/information.htm.

In addition to these contracted services, most refugee-run Mutual Assistance Associations provide a variety of services, including translation, tutoring, orientation, and employment services which can assist refugees in obtaining self-sufficiency.

Bilingual Program Documents

DWD has work program and other documents that have been translated into Hmong in order to help clients access our services. The DWD documents can be found at:

http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/programs/refugees/BureauWide/bilingual_materials.htm

Bilingual and other economic assistance documents can be found at the DHFS Website:

<http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/forms/index.htm>

Phone Translation Services

Each agency is responsible for ensuring that interpretation services are available to assure meaningful access for the customer, in their own language. This may be done through bilingual staffing, contracts for services, or shared resources. The DWD has a contract with Certified Language International (CLI), a phone translation vendor. Local agencies may make financial arrangements to access this vendor without having to separately bid for this service.

CLI provides translation services by phone for up to 13 languages (including Hmong, Thai, Laotian, Vietnamese, Russian and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian). Interpreters are available 24 hrs a day, and billing is done only for phone time. CLI has also indicated that they will provide the services at the same rate as DWD for other agencies. However, each interested agency must

contact CLI at 1-800-362-3241 to set up their own customer account code and billing address before requesting assistance. The prices and vendor information for this contract are located at: <http://vendornet.state.wi.us/vendornet/aspbin/bulshownigp.asp?BulletinID=1354> .

Interpreter Training

Staff and contracted agencies providing interpretation should have training to become qualified interpreters. The Bureau of Migrant, Refugee, and Labor Services subsidizes training for bilingual staff who speak refugee languages to become qualified interpreters. Training options include: a two-day general, introductory training on the roles, responsibilities, and ethics of an interpreter; a five-day training on medical interpretation; and a two-day training on court-interpretation for experienced interpreters. Agencies interested in enrolling bilingual staff in interpreter training should email to: elena.frishman@dwd.state.wi.us identifying the type of training desired and the number of trainees. DWD staff will then be able to set up appropriate training sessions.

CONTACT:

W-2 Related Questions:

Department's Regional Office Contract Managers

Refugee Service Questions:

Susan G. Levy, Section Chief

Immigrant Integration Section, Room G100; GEF-1

Department of Workforce Development

Email susan.levy@dwd.state.wi.us

Phone 608-266-8354

Attachment(s):

- 1- Refugee Processing Procedures
- 2- Memorandum of Understanding Template

Attachment 1

Refugee Resettlement Procedures

(Reference Refugee Assistance Program found in Chapter 20 of the W-2 Manual)

1. The regional VOLAG receives refugee arrival date information from the State Department through the VOLAGS' National agency.
2. The VOLAG promptly contacts the local IM, refugee E&T, and W-2 agencies to coordinate refugee appointments needed for refugee E&T, FS, MA/RMA, W-2, FSET, RCA, and CC (as applicable).

Refugees that receive "Match Grant" support, cannot apply for W-2 or RCA program consideration until "Match Grant" income and services end.

A copy of IM and W-2 appointment letters must be forwarded to the VOLAG. The VOLAG ensures that the refugee attends appointments.

3. Refugee W-2, FSET and RCA cases:
 - (a) W-2: If the refugee becomes a W-2 case, the VOLAG case manager, the refugee E&T case manager (when different from the VOLAG case manager) and the W-2 FEP will coordinate to develop the self-sufficiency plan and employability plan to determine how refugee E&T and W-2 program services can be best provided to serve the refugee.
 - (b) RCA. The W-2 agency must refer the RCA recipient to a refugee employment and training or FSET program within 30 days. If the client will be co-enrolled in FSET and Refugee Employment and Training the refugee E&T case manager and FSET case manager coordinate to determine how refugee E&T and FSET program services can be provided to best serve the refugee, including development of self-sufficiency and employability plans.

Since confidential client information may be shared during co-case management across agencies, each program case manager is responsible for ensuring that the refugee has provided consent as needed by their respective program's requirements.

5. Although refugee co-case management is accomplished across multiple agencies, local case records will be maintained at each agency in accordance with respective program and agency requirements.

SUMMARY OF THE RESETTLEMENT AGENCY (VOLAG) ROLE

The Resettlement Agency (or "VOLAG") will typically provide initial refugee support services including housing, life skills training, and other basic support during the first 90 days of resettlement. The VOLAG also serve as the primary point of contact to connect new refugees to resources in the community. The VOLAG's role includes, but is not limited to:

- ◆ Receive arrival date notification from the State Department or National VOLAG
- ◆ Notify US relatives the refugee's date of arrival
- ◆ Greet refugee family at the airport with US relatives
- ◆ Assist with initial resettlement costs with federal Reception and Placement grant and federal Match Grant when applicable

- ◆ Assist with housing arrangements
- ◆ Provide life skills training and orientation services
- ◆ Accompany refugee family to the local school district for school enrollment
- ◆ Arrange the necessary health screening and medical appointments for family
- ◆ Refer family and accompany them to the local IM/W-2 agencies to apply for FS, MA, W2 or RCA/RMA
- ◆ Assist refugee in completing and submitting the necessary program applications for benefit
- ◆ Coordinate the appointments to ensure attendance
- ◆ Provide bilingual support during appointments
- ◆ Assist refugee family to obtain or provide the necessary verification (such as USCIS documentation) needed to meet program requirements
- ◆ Coordinate ESL assistance
- ◆ Coordinate citizenship assistance

SUMMARY OF THE W-2 AGENCIES' ROLE

The local W-2 agencies determine program eligibility for W-2 and/or RCA/RMA and provide W-2/Food Stamp Employment and Training programs. The W-2 Agencies' roles include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Coordinate appointments with the VOLAG/anchor relative to ensure attendance during appointments
- ◆ Contact VOLAG staff to determine if refugee received federal R&P or "Match Grant" support income or services
- ◆ Determine program eligibility for and W-2 or RCA/RMA
- ◆ Manage the employment development process for W-2 or FSET or referral to Refugee Employment and Training
- ◆ Schedule life skills training and other orientation activities in Employability Plan
- ◆ The W-2 FEP and/or the FSET case manager will coordinate with the VOLAG and/or Refugee E & T case manager for dual enrollment. This will allow W-2 and FSET to schedule and monitor life skills training provided by the voluntary agency and to access the bilingual skills of the refugee case manager/job developer
- ◆ Enroll participant in ESL and other required education and training

SUMMARY OF REFUGEE E&T ROLE AND OTHER MAA SERVICES

- ◆ Refugee E&T agencies serve as a key member in providing bilingual job development and post-placement follow-up, family focused planning, co-case management with W-2 FEPs and others, translation assistance, plus coordination with the anchor relative and local refugee community
 - ◆ Provide employment services to RCA recipients
 - ◆ Provide services to secondary wage earners in the family to help them enter the labor force
- Provide longer term bilingual refugee family support
- ◆ Services can vary and usually are more comprehensive in areas of larger refugee populations. Depending on services provided, a refugee and their family could possibly receive bilingual employment placement and follow-up, a longer term family self-sufficiency plan, coordination with supporting community leaders, housing assistance, trauma and family counseling services, ESL and citizenship training, elderly services, citizenship, and other family support services

Attachment 2

W-2 AGENCY, VOLUNTARY RESETTLEMENT AGENCY AND REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Agencies receiving refugee Employment & Training funding must complete a MOU with the local Wisconsin Works (W-2) agency. Private voluntary agencies are not under contract with the Department of Workforce Development but are encouraged to cooperate in the planning and provision of services to refugees.

I. Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is to ensure that refugee resettlement services are coordinated with the local Wisconsin Works (W-2) agency, including case management functions and joint employability planning for dual enrollment clients.

II. Parties and Agreement Period

A. This Memorandum of Understanding is between

- (1) the **refugee resettlement agency** (or refugee Voluntary Agency- "VOLAG") whose business address is _____

_____ and whose
employee responsible for day-to-day administration of this agreement is
_____.

- (2) the **refugee employment and training provider** (agency operating the refugee Social Service or Targeted Assistance Employment and Training program) whose business address is _____ and whose employee responsible for day-to-day administration of this agreement is _____.

- (3) and the **Wisconsin Works (W-2) Agency** - whose business address is _____ and
whose employee responsible for day-to-day administration of this agreement is
_____.

B. This MOU is to be effective for the period **(enter start and end dates.)**

III. Program Assurances.

This MOU will coordinate case management for refugees participating in refugee employment and training programs, W-2 and Income Maintenance programs. Refugees participating in the W-2 program are also eligible for support services provided by voluntary resettlement agencies and employment and training services from refugee employment and training providers. By clarifying each agency's role in the employment and training process, this MOU will reduce duplication and enhance service delivery by leveraging all resources available.

Goals of this MOU include:

- A. Inter-Agency Coordination. Each partner will participate in and cooperate with each other's efforts to develop bilingual need assessments, barrier screenings, joint planning and coordinate service delivery.

- B. Client Tracking and Fiscal Monitoring. Each partner shall maintain client tracking and fiscal monitoring systems as required by their respective contracts with the Department of Workforce Development, to ensure timely and accurate level of fiscal commitment is known at all times, so that the agreement level is not exceeded and so that an accurate accounts payable ledger is maintained.

IV. Agency Responsibilities

This section should consist of locally developed statements of services and other program deliverables. This should include precise narrative and statistical statements of the:

- current and projected (in the coming year) number of refugees participating in W-2
- a specific referral process (with names and phone numbers) between agencies
- expectations for timelines for notification of arrivals and scheduling of appointments
- procedures for processing of asylees and secondary migrants who do not have a local voluntary resettlement agency
- procedures for coordination of employability planning
- how translation and interpretation services will be coordinated for refugee/asylee W-2 participants
- specific employment and training services to be delivered

Common language that must be included in all MOU's includes:

- (1) All refugee and asylee employment and training cases will have Family Self-Sufficiency Plan to include an Employability plan.
- (2) All Refugee Cash Assistance participants must participate in employment services within 30 days of receipt of assistance.
- (3) The agency (either the Refugee Employment and Training agency, the W-2/FSET agency, or the VOLAG) that helped a refugee/asylee secure employment must provide the other agency the name and location of the employer, type of job, wages and benefits within ten working days from the date of job placement, and coordinate follow up service delivery.

The roles and responsibilities of each agency are identified in the Refugee Services Plan template which is incorporated herein by reference.

V. Program Administration.

- A. Confidentiality. Each party shall maintain the confidentiality of any information or material it receives from other parties concerning clients served through this MOU in accordance with program requirements. A signed consent form from the refugee will be necessary to ensure agreement with case management information sharing across W-2 and refugee assistance agencies.
- B. Reporting. Services provided to eligible refugees and asylees participating in the W-2 or FSET Program can be reported to the W-2 (or FSET) program and the appropriate refugee E&T agency employment and training program.

VI. Signatures

This MOU is agreed upon and approved by the authorized representatives of the refugee resettlement agency, the refugee employment and training agency, the W-2 agency and the Income Maintenance agency as indicated below.

For Refugee Resettlement Agency (VOLAG)

[Typed Name] Date
[Title]

For Refugee Employment and Training (E&T) Agency

[Typed Name] Date
[Title]

For Wisconsin Works (W-2) Agency

[Typed Name] Date
[Title]